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GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE FINDS ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF WATER FOR CALIFORNIA 7/16/2003

SACRAMENTO

In its report presented to the Legislature today, the Governor's Recycled Water Task Force identified a significant additional source of water for the State of California - recycled water.

"Many creative approaches are needed to increase water supplies for California's growing population and environmental needs," said Governor Gray Davis. "Recycling and reuse of water will be one important part of that solution."

Specifically, the Recycled Water Task Force foresees the potential of quadrupling recycled water use in California over the next thirty years. Doing so would free up enough potable water to meet 30 to 50 percent of the domestic water needs of the 17 million new Californians expected by 2030. That quantity would be the equivalent of one third the water stored behind Oroville Dam in the major Lake Oroville reservoir in a good year.

"I want to thank all the experts and stakeholders of the Recycled Water Task Force for their commitment to public safety and the efficient use of California's water," said Governor Gray Davis. "The Task Force came up with a consensus document that provides a blueprint for addressing community concerns and safely developing a significant additional source of water to help California meet its water needs for the next thirty years."

The report also noted that recycled water - used mostly for irrigation, landscaping, groundwater recharge, and industry - will free up freshwater from the State's wells and our reservoirs for home use.

Among the Task Force recommendations were:

- Expanding funding for health research, recycling projects, public awareness, and academic programs
- Engaging the public in an active dialogue in the media, communities and schools across California
- Adopting uniform state-wide regulation for dual plumbing and indoor use of recycled water
- Other essential parts of the solution will include, of course, conservation, improved storage, desalination, and voluntary water exchanges between California communities and industries

Recycled water use is currently about 500,000 acre-feet and would rise to about two million acre-feet under the plan. (An acre-foot is 326,900 gallons. An acre-foot of water serves the water needs of two families, or approximately 7 to 8 people, for one year.)

The mission of the Task Force was set in AB 331 (Goldberg) passed in 2001. The Task Force identified the opportunities for and obstacles or disincentives to increasing the safe use of recycled water. The panel of 40 members included federal, State, and local governmental and private sector entities, environmental organizations, public health professionals, world-renowned researchers, water managers and community activists. Task Force members met several times throughout the past year, without compensation, and released the report at its final meeting on May 27, 2003.

The State Department of Water Resources organized and implemented the Task Force in collaboration with the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Health Services. The Task Force report received the support of agency secretaries and departmental directors. A copy of the Task Force report is available on DWR's website at <http://www.owue.water.ca.gov/recycle/> and the report is expected to be published in print by July 1, 2003. For more information contact Fawzi Karajeh of the Department of Water Resources at (916) 651-9669 or fkarajeh@water.ca.gov.

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